



Summer Survival Tips

The heat is on! Summer's hot and dry conditions can cause our water bills to skyrocket. Our intense summers can tax the endurance of many plants - so proper watering is critical. And our swimming pools can lose over 10-inches of water and 2,500 gallons of water each month in the summer season. These helpful tips that will save you water and money:

- **Adjust Watering Schedules** – Water needs will increase as the temperature rises. Your city water conservation office has a free landscape watering guide available that provides scheduling guidelines or go to wateruseitwisely.com for an [interactive version of the landscape watering guide](#).
- **Check Irrigation Systems** – Replace clogged drip emitters and repair leaks. Increase emitter numbers and adjust emitter placement on trees. For sprinklers, place cups or cans out into your lawn, turn your system on and check for uneven coverage to determine problem areas. [Fixing Common Irrigation Problems](#).
- **Mulch Plant Roots** – Replenish organic mulches around your plants each year to improve soil, reduce moisture loss and keep roots cool during the summer months. Keep mulch away from plant trunk or main stem and cover the mulch with granite if you prefer. [Tips on mulching](#).
- **Weed Removal** – Weeds can compete with landscape plants for water. Remove the weeds by hand or check with your local nursery for safe weed sprays.
- **Fertilize Non-Native Plants** – Follow product label recommendations to fertilize established non-native plants. Native plants do not require fertilizers and generally grow better without them. Fertilizing encourages new growth requiring more water.
- **Prune Sparingly** – Prune plants only when necessary. Low tree limbs or branches keep plants shaded and cooler in summer.
- **Select Replacements for Lost Plants** – If plants have died or are not performing well, now is a good time to get ideas on new plants to replace them. Be sure to select native or well-adapted plants to ensure future success. [Find our plant list!](#)
- **Keep the Splash in Your Pool** – When you have an automatic pool refilling valve, it's easy to miss leaks occurring in the pool or through your pool equipment. Learn how to look for leaks and find water-saving, draining and refilling tips, too. [Learn more](#).
- **Consider a Conversion** – Summer is actually a great time to remove grass so you can replace it with a beautiful desert landscape in the fall. See if you qualify for our [Grass-to-Xeriscape Incentive](#) program and you could get up to \$575.
- **Check Your Water Use** – Mesa offers a [Home Water Calculator](#). This is a great tool to determine how much water you should be using for your specific household. Once completed, you can request a free water-saving kit that includes a low-flow showerhead, a hose nozzle, and more.



by Donna DiFrancesco, Conservation Coordinator, City of Mesa